

Special Town Commission Meeting of the Town of Ocean Ridge held on Wednesday, January 16, 2013 at 8:30 AM in the Town Hall Meeting Chambers

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Pugh and roll call was answered by the following:

Commissioner Aaskov
Commissioner Allison

Commissioner Brookes
Commissioner Hennigan

Mayor Pugh

Town Clerk Hancsak relayed a message from Town Atty Spillias advising that any notes either taken on the evaluation form or even personal notes regarding the Town Manager Evaluation should be preserved in the event the Town Attorney has to review them for any public record determination. Comm Brookes and Hennigan questioned if at the last meeting they agreed to turn them in. Clerk Hancsak advised that the Commission made no formal votes after discussion hence the statement.

DISCUSS TOWN MANAGER POSITION

Mayor Pugh requested that the evaluation occur in a dignified manner noting it can be awkward in public.

Comm Aaskov volunteered to speak first. She commented that she felt bad the way the Town Manager was treated a year ago, especially considering the 2 tragedies he endured. She agreed he was not 100% attentive then but felt he has done excellent now. She commented that the residents she spoke with advised he was quick to respond to any concerns and felt he was doing an excellent job.

Comm Hennigan suggested that the Commission go through each category on the evaluation form and provide examples on the pros and cons.

Comm Allison commented that she could do both with a summary and address each area. She stated that the Town Manager's job is a difficult one in that he has to satisfy both the Commissioners and residents. She felt that in dealing with the Commissioners he was doing a good job with better communication and an open door policy, which she thanked him. She stated that the feedback she has received from the residents has been positive. She added that there a few items that can be improved on.

Comm Hennigan stated she had a contrary view, that although he was a wonderfully nice person she felt he did not demonstrate the skills necessary in a Town Manager capacity. She felt he relied on staff too heavily. She felt his strongest strength was he was very reactive, but not as much proactive. She advised that she too has received resident feedback and at least 12 people expressed concern on his handling of the budget and the PBSO Proposal. She felt there was a lack of planning or goals or objectives for the Town. She advised that she has met several times asking for various levels of improvement but has been told "it has always been done that way". She stated that she has met with many Town Managers and she feels that they look for ways to save money, plan for the future, or look to do things differently. Overall, her evaluation resulted in a score of 2 – Requiring Improvement.

Comm Brookes agreed with a lot of the comments that have been said. He commented that he felt challenged acknowledging that there is a difference between a small community vs a large community.

SPECIAL TOWN COMMISSION MEETING HELD JANUARY 16, 2013

The first items of the evaluation were Leadership and Supervision. Overall the majority of the Commission felt that these areas were “Satisfactory” but there is room for improvement. Concerns that were expressed included: whether he is perceived as the ultimate leader/decision maker that can demonstrate stronger authority, needing to be more assertive, improve in the motivation area for himself and staff, provide more descriptive responses to questions, additional follow up needs to be provided to the Commission, listing of priorities with updates was important; and he relies too heavily on staff. They felt the Town Manager should be the one to actually control the meetings with direct recommendations and the Commission should then be reactionary to him.

The next area discussed was Communication. The majority of the Commission stated that this area was “Satisfactory or Higher” in this area. However, a comment was made that oral messages were not complete, ideas presented did not include the pros/cons for the PBSO proposal or PBA negotiations, and he should be more familiar with the budget process and the budget communication should be more complete.

Concerning the Policies & Procedures, Planning & Organizing, Execution, and Financial Management/Budget areas the consensus of the Commission was that these areas were “Satisfactory”. Comments were made that there could be improvement in becoming more proactive (most stressed item), increased planning and organization for current and future needs, routine review of policy and procedure updates and recommending changes to the Commission in a clear and complete fashion. Budget concerns were already discussed.

The next areas discussed were Town Commission Relations, Community Relations, Intergovernmental Relations and Personal Traits & Interpersonal Skills. The majority of the Commission stated that this area was “Satisfactory”. The Commission all concurred that the Town Manager had good communication skills with the residents and tries to resolve their issues but again cited that some of these concerns could have been handled proactively as opposed to reactively. The majority felt that communication with the Commissioners has improved with communication on a regular basis. Comm Hennigan commented that she has only been contacted individually once in the past 5 months prior to meetings. Improvement in self confidence and additional planning is desired.

Comm Allison commented that the role of the Commission is to set policy and not micromanage by calling him regarding the routine operations on a daily basis and she appreciated the calls she receives from the Town Manager prior to meetings. Comm Brookes agrees that the Commission should not micromanage, however; he felt that some of the issues have either not gone full circle or have not been conveyed after they have and he felt this displayed a lack of confidence. Mayor Pugh commented that sometimes he thinks they do micromanage because it is a small Town and there aren't many issues. He felt it was good to plan but the Town runs very well and the Commission is well balanced and makes good decisions and sometimes we may expect more from a small the Manager than they should. Comm Hennigan stated that the Commission may not have as many questions if the Town Manager communicated more behind the scenes.

Mayor Pugh commented that that the evaluation form is a nice guide, however; meeting in person is better and he felt concerns should continually be discussed on a 1 on 1 basis

SPECIAL TOWN COMMISSION MEETING HELD JANUARY 16, 2013

and if a Commissioner does not feel the job is being done they should bring their concerns to the Commission for possible replacement. He stated that he felt there was a total improvement from last year to this year.

Comm Hennigan agreed with the 1 on 1 communication but also stated that each of the Commissioners needs to hear each others' opinions and unfortunately it has to be done at a public meeting. She also felt that each employee is entitled to hear what their employer feels about their performance. Regarding the budget process, she stated that she may feel she needs more pieces of information than the other Commissioners to fully understand and feel comfortable before its adoption and she did not feel this was micromanaging.

Town Manager Schenck thanked the Commission for their honesty and took this evaluation to heart and he would try to improve in the areas mentioned. He also apologized to Comm Hennigan on his lack of individual communication with her and said this too would improve.

Speaking from the public, Jim Bonfiglio, 5616 N Ocean Blvd., commented that as Chairman of the P & Z Commission he has a lot of communication with staff and suggested that the boards also be involved in the evaluation process.

Betty Bingham, 1 Ocean Ave., stated that as long as she could remember the Town Clerk has done the majority of the budget and if the Commission wants that to change they should have told the Town Manager. She also stated that dating back to Chief Spano the police department was unofficially ran mostly independently.

Terry Brown, Harbour Drive South, stated he could comment on both pros and cons but he was more concerned with the long term performance of the Town and recommended a continuity type plan. He cited that it has been mentioned that the Town Clerk performs a lot of the functions and she will be retiring in 3 years. Mayor Pugh mentioned that he has already had conversations with the staff regarding this. Comm Allison stated that this was a good point and the job descriptions should be reviewed.

Don Magruder, 9 Ridge Blvd., stated he supported the Town Manager. He stated that even though he was at the highest level he did not have a thorough specific job description that he can then be held accountable for. Manager Schenck mentioned that the Town Manager had a general description in the Charter. Mr. Magruder complimented his work on the drainage projects, new Town Hall building, and also his knowledge of the rules and regulations concerning grants, etc. Comm Hennigan reminded those present that this evaluation covered this past 1 year period but she agreed that the Town Manager should draft a job description of his duties. Comm Brookes agreed. The other Commissioners stated a general description was already in the charter and should be provided at the next meeting.

Regarding comments concerning presentation of the budgets, Town Clerk Hancsak commented that she usually presents the budget because she is the one that deals with most of the accounts and month/year end closings. She stated that Comm Hennigan has requested additional information during the last 2 years which has been provided and will be distributed with the budget packets for this upcoming budget.

SPECIAL TOWN COMMISSION MEETING HELD JANUARY 16, 2013

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM

Attest By:

Town Clerk

Mayor Pugh

Commissioner Brookes

Commissioner Hennigan

Commissioner Allison

Commissioner Aaskov